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June 11, 2008

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VIA FACSIMILE & U.S. MAIL

Chairman Ross Johnson
Fair Political Practices Commission
428 J Street, Suite 620
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: June 12, 2008 Agenda Item #12
Prenotice Discussion of Amendments to Regulation 18946.4**

Dear Chairman Johnson:

I write on behalf of the California Political Attorneys Association ("CPAA") regarding proposed amendments to Regulation 18946.4. We urge the Fair Political Practices Commission to reject staff's proposal to eliminate the "no value rule" that applies to fundraising events of organizations exempt from taxation under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Members of the CPAA advise both the charitable organizations that host fundraising events attended by public officials, and the public officials who attend those events. We have seen that the attendance of public officials at charitable fundraising events and their associations with those organizations enhance the stature of the organizations, and help the charities reach their fundraising goals. In addition, charitable fundraising events provide public officials and their constituents with the opportunity to exchange information and ideas regarding community needs and resource availability.

Because many 501(c)(3) organizations lack the resources to fund formal legislative programs and have limited opportunity for direct contact with

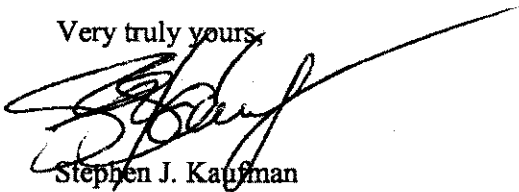
government representatives, annual fundraising events are usually the place where charities can educate government leaders as to their organization's activities. These events frequently bring together persons to raise awareness about exempt charitable purposes established by the Internal Revenue Code, including relief of the poor, the distressed, or the underprivileged; advancement of education or science; erecting or maintaining public buildings or monuments; easing neighborhood tensions; eliminating prejudice and discrimination; defending civil rights; and combating community deterioration and juvenile delinquency.

Elimination of the "no value rule" would effectively hinder attendance by government representatives at these charitable events by creating potential liability for disclosure, gift limit and conflict of interest violations where none currently exists. Because the proposed elimination of this rule stands to negatively affect charities and public officials addressing significant public policy issues, we think it important that the Commission be presented with a clear articulation of the reasons supporting elimination of this rule. In our estimation, this has not occurred. While the May 30, 2008, staff memorandum provides the Rose Bowl Game and Rose Parade as examples of 501(c)(3) fundraising events, these examples do not represent the vast majority of charitable fundraisers by such organizations as the Boys and Girls Club or the American Lung Association (mentioned in the Commission's own advice letters) that benefit from the current rule.

Attendance at charitable events is an important function of public officials, and greatly benefits the organizations they support. Eliminating the current rule has the potential of adversely impacting charities that work with the most vulnerable of California's populations. For this reason, we urge the Fair Political Practices Commission to reject the proposed changes to Regulation 18946.4.

We thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



Stephen J. Kauffman

cc: Commissioner Ray Remy
Commissioner A. Eugene Hugeunin, Jr.
Commissioner Robert Leidigh
Commissioner Timothy A. Hodson
Scott Hallabrin, General Counsel
William J. Lenkeit, Senior Commission Counsel